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A PALESTINIAN'S INSIGHTS ON THE PEACE PROCESS

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THE McGILL DAILY

VOLUME 83 • NUMBER 11 | Recycling news since 1911 | WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1993

Young Liberals Plan for Employment

BY DAVE EVERETT

Young Liberals of Québec outlined the Liberal Party platform at a press conference held on Monday in Montréal. The Liberal Party's position is centered on providing Canadians a plan for economic recovery, health care and tax reform while managing the federal deficit.

"The Progressive Conservatives have only concentrated on reducing the deficit and cutting inflation. But this has led to unemployment," said Rodriguez.

In "Creating Opportunity", the Liberal Party's plan for Canada, particular emphasis is placed on the development of new programs to create employment for Canadian youth, Rodriguez said. Over 20% of Canadian youth are unemployed in1993, he said.

Two projects are designed to address this problem. The Apprenticeship program, based on a co-op system, would improve student prospects of successfully completing the transition from school to the workplace.

"Students don't have enough experience to get a job, and with no job they can't get experience. The solution is to mix study and employment." said Rodriguez.

The Canadian Youth Service Corps is a proposed community-based social and environmental service program for Canadians under 25. According to the Liberals, it would instill participants with necessary work skills and a sense of community awareness.

By their third year, these youth employment plans would involve 10,000 people at a cost of $100 million.

Major economic issues form the bulk of the Liberal campaign's platform. Liberals are in favour of free trade, however they reject the FTA and NAFTA agreements. They state that these agreements were poorly negotiated to ignore the issues of environmental protection and put Canadian workers in jeopardy. They believe a renegotiated free trade policy could protect Canadian jobs through retraining and anti-dumping codes.

Rodriguez supports Liberal party leader Jean Chrétien's ability to make these changes. "Chrétien is the most experienced leader. He knows what has to be done to create employment. He's realized that we can't reduce the deficit by just cutting spending but also by creating jobs."

In presenting the platform of the Liberal Party, young liberals give young Canadians three other options. First, a PC government bent on slashing programs and maintaining the Mulroney status-quo. Second, an unrealistic NDP job creation policy that would increase the deficit significantly. Third, the Bloc Quebeçois, a party with no rational or productive platform, seeking to win seats through nationalist sentiment.

Young Liberals wield significant influence within the Liberal Party. "One-third of votes on party resolution are accorded to the Young Liberals. Furthermore, Young Liberals had a voice in the formation of the Liberal plan over the next five years." said Rodriguez.

Do not recycle your Tory MP

Throw the Rascals OUT!

Feminist groups evicted at Concordia

BY CAROL MCQUEEN

Montréal-(CUP) Three womens' groups at Concordia came back to school in Sptember only to find themselves locked out of their office.

The Concordia Women's Collective, The Lesbian Studies Coalition and the Pro-Choice Collective shared a room in the P-Annex on Mackay street for the past few years.

But this semester, they discovered their office space has been given to the Irish Students' Society and the Physics Students' Association.

The Concordia University Students' Association (CUSA) never notified them of the change and they cannot retrieve their personal belongings and documents.

"We never received a written notification that we were being evicted," said Charlene Nero, of the Women's Collective, and former CUSA co-president.

However, Ali Ghaemi, VP administration for CUSA, who is in charge of allocating space to clubs at Concordia, said that the groups had been given a memo in early June asking them to come to his office.

"These groups did not come in," said Ghaemi. "Basically since December these groups have been inactive. I will give them space as soon as they come in and I can find out if they have elected their executive if they've been following their constitution."

Nero expressed concern that if the Women's Collective is not given space there would be a void that would not be filled.

"The Women's Collective is one of the oldest non-academic clubs on campus. For the past 12 years, we have been actively involved in helping assault victims, raising awareness about feminism and making Concordia a safer place for women," said Nero. "Bumping off three active feminist groups will reflect badly on the university," she added.

Nero is also particularly concerned about the groups's confidential files.

"Over the years, the Women's Collective has helped a number of assault victims. We a very careful with this information as it is confidential. No strangers are at liberty to go through our files," she said.

Jason Imanpoor said, of the Irish Students' Society, found books, files, cassettes and electronic equipment in his groups's office.

"We were given this space by CUSA. We don't know what to do with all this stuff. We certainly don't want to throw it out," he said.

Timothy Johnston, financial co-ordinator of Concordia's Queer Collective which occupies the office next door, stressed that the eviction was unfair.

"These groups were given a bum rap. There is no reason for them to lose their space and go through the long process of finding new preises, especially as they were active, legitimate groups," said Johnston.

Ghaemi defended his position.

"There has been a lot of pressure on CUSA for space for clubs, space is at a premium," said Ghaemi. "To be honest I don't know if these groups need to be active right now. We already have the Concordia Women's Centre, the Office on the Status of Women, and the Women's Studies Association." — *additional information from the Daily*

Pizza Hut:

Does it give McGill gas?

BY LIZ UNNA

The new Pizza Hut in the Alley has sparked strong reactions from McGill's community. Some are thrilled by the arrival of "Pizza Hell" on campus. Others see it as the selling of the Alley's soul. Complaints range from bad gas to bad taste.

A student's mother complained to the *Daily* about the Hut last week, and we decided that we have had enough. So we conducted a survey of McGill Pizza Hut consumers to get to the heart of the matter.

"What do you think of Pizza Hut pizza?", we probed.

Thomas Whyte, McGill student

"It (Pizza Hut pizza) was very greasy. Ummm, it was vegetarian and I think it was very lame vegetarian pizza. The thing is way too small to feed one person. If you're hungry, you have to buy two. It's mostly crust, Gert's pizza was more filling." — Thomas White, McGill student

Kevin Byrne

"I like it, the price is good, the size good." — Joanne from Travel Cuts

"I got really sick. After three times, I don't eat it anymore. I don't even want to touch it. It's because we smell it all day. In the morning, the dough smells sour, like yeast." — Sophia from Travel Cuts

"Aside from the fact that it's average tasting and expensive... One day, I got a box and the dough was raw. I returned it and it was still raw and I didn't really enjoy it that much." — anonymous McGill student at large

"I was disappointed, yet I feel perhaps that the problem lay in my expectations. I got a little gas. My bowel distends occassionally yet I didn't find any abnormal distension after eating at Pizza Hut. I don't know, perhaps the problem is with me." — Kevin Byrne, smug McGill student

"It was good, it was fine. The price is very good, too. It does make it very hot in here (in the Alley) though, very hot. — Vanessa, McGill student

Sophia shows her dissatisfaction

"It's not well cooked, but it's better than what was offered at RVC this morning. I'm hungry, so I eat it. It's convenient more than anything else. As with any fast food, the food is pretty bad, but you eat it because it's convenient. It's hot in here, but the Alley was always hot." — Amina Mirza, McGill student

Sophia from Travel Cuts

Brothers Mark and Justin, McGill students

"It's good, the customers are very satisfied, they keep coming back." — Pizza Hut employees

John digs in

"They suck. It sucks. I was gone for a year and they transformed the whole place into a boiling hot sauna that smells like bad supreme pizza. The vegetarian pizza is not worth the money — too much crust, not enough toppings, too small." — Sophia, disgruntled McGill student

"It's not really good pizza. But it's nice to have an inexpensive, light meal on campus. It's good in that respect. It's just not great-tasting pizza." — John, McGill student

"I'm a staunch supporter of Pizza Hut. It's good. I work from 9 to 5 twice a week and the only thing that saves me is Pizza Hut and a whiskey." — Isabelle Stramwasser, McGill student

Amina Mirza, McGill Student

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Do nothing to fight consumerism

'Buy Nothing Day' tackles consumer frenzy

BY CHRIS SHERIDAN

There is no denying that we live in a consumer culture. 'Shop till you drop', an oft-quoted motto of the 80's, still prevails in the 90's with ferocious tenacity.

Campusfest, brought to McGill last week by Marketsource, is a testament to our product-minded culture. The 'consumer-fest' brought in several different companies who distributed, to eager McGill students, samples of their products, from Pop-tarts to Tampax.

"I was cringing at the sight of everyone running for free items," says Allison Dudley of the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG).

Campusfest was a thinly veiled advertising coup — by offering free stuff, the companies hoped to generate new consumers within our target market.

DAILY PHOTO BY THOMAS WHITE

Campusfest frenzy

Now a week later, we have an anecdote to, or at least a critique of, consumer frenzy. September 25 is national 'Buy Nothing Day', a one-day event to raise awareness about overconsumption and consumerism in Canada.

"An across the board, all-encompassing boycott of everything" is how Ted Dave describes this Friday's 'Buy Nothing Day'.

Dave, a freelance artist based in Vancouver, initiated the idea last year. Since then, there has been much grassroots support for the event across the country.

This year Adbusters, a "media watchdog" and consumer advocy magazine based in Vancouver is the main voice behind the campaign. According to spokesperson Brenda Shaffer, "Adbusters is the vehicle for "Buy Nothing Day." She added that the day also acts as "a reminder of the the power of the consumer."

Amy Rouillard, first year political science student, has brought, with the verbal support of QPIRG, 'Buy Nothing Day' to the McGill campus. She stated that students will simply be asked to buy nothing.

"It seems to me that 'Buy Nothing Day' is a symbolic action that gives people a chance to think about their own consumption," she said.

Referring to overconsumption "as the root of all evil", Rouillard added that the day is not designed to attack individual companies. Instead it is the idea of consumerism and the way it can work both for and against the buyer which is being challenged.

"Assuming no one buys anything next Friday...they [store owners] will be forced to think about how they treat their customers," she said.

The present levels of consumption in North America cannot sustain life forever. An article in the September/October issue of the Utne reader draws attention to our consumer habits. The article states, "20 per cent of the world's population, largely in the north, control and consume 80 per cent of the world's wealth."

Advertising is very often linked with our overconsumption, said Dave. The one-day boycott is a way to resist the questionable lifestyles and the overconsumption that the media promotes.

"It's time that the post-alternative urban hipsters realise that they are the target market," said Dave, in reference to the twenty-something generation.

Adding to this, he pointed to a recent survey conducted in the US by Information Resources Incorporated. The survey found that the top three most important grocery store items bought by twenty-somethings are the two litre bottle of Coke, the two litre bottle of Pepsi, and Campbell's chicken noodle soup.

"I'm not out to erase consumerism from the planet or even capitalism for that matter." But he stressed that we must consume responsibly, if possible.

Last year, some Canadian businesses participated in the annual boycott. Arbour Recycling Centre in Peterborough, Debbie's Dinette in Sydney and Earth's General Store in Edmonton all shut down for the day. This year, Arbour will shut down again and the other two businesses will work on a barter system for the day.

So this Friday, show your support for Buy Nothing Day by doing and buying absolutely nothing.

E=u+at

Attention: All wireheads, geeks, hackers, techno-junkies, phreaks, cyberpunks or anyone with an interest in science and technology. Come to the Daily Science and Technology special issue meeting, Monday, Sept 27, 4:30 in Shatner B-03, and give us your hex dump.

EVENTS

Open Road

First general meeting at 5p.m. in Shatner 435. It'll be short since we'll be heading down to Berri Metro to join the anti-National Front march.

McGill Savoy Society

Auditions for Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Gondoliers*, today and Thursday from 7-10:30p.m. Shatner 425. Call 398-6826 for more info.

McGill Improv

Season begins with inspired silliness and audience participation. Live comedy every Wednesday at 8:15p.m. in the Alley. Vulcans don't giggle?

QPIRG BBQ

The Québec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) Barbeque at the 3 bares fountain on lower campus, 11-3p.m., half veggie/half meat, ice cream, soft drinks and beer. $2 all you can eat, beer is extra.

QPIRG biz

General Interest Meeting in Shatner 426, 4-6p.m. Come and learn about what we're doing this year and how you can get involved. Wine and cheese!

Conference on Women and Democracy in the Middle East

25 September, 9:00 am to 5:00pm, Concordia University

1455 W. Maisonneuve Blvd., Hall Building Room H 435

Students and Unemployed $5 in advance. Phone 982-6616 for more information.

Black Students Network

General meeting. MACES board room at 3437 Peel (corner of Sherbrooke) at 5p.m.

NDG food depot

Volunteers needed for a new information, referral and advocacy service called Info-Depot. Call Dan or Jason at 484-1471.

McGill Co-ed Medical Fraternity

Secon and third (last!) orientation meetings of the term at 1p.m. and 2:30p.m. in Union 425. All students from all faculties welcome!

LBGM meeting

Lesbians, Bisexuals and gays of McGill (LBGM) will be having their first general meeting Thursday, September 23 at 6:30p.m. Meet at the LBGM office door, Shatner 432. Don't be shy!

Middle East Peace Talks

Professor Harold Walker will speak today on the peace process. 12:30p.m. Hillel 3460 Stanley. Call 845-9171 for information.

SSMU Blood Drive

Continues in Shatner Ballroom, 10a.m.-7:30p.m. Help us reach 3,000 pints.

Islamic Society of McGill presents

Wednesday evening with Br. Abdu-Selam Al-Manyawi. An information session for new and returning students. Tonight at 6p.m., 550 Sherbrooke West room 1185 (east tower). Refreshment will be served. All welcome.

COMMENT

Leaders and Visionaries

The world was transformed last week.

Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin momentously shook hands in mutual recognition of a new future for their people. A two thousand year battle over homelands, beliefs, cultures and histories, was formally put to rest.

In Quebec we heard the knell of Bourassa's reign, marking the finale of the province's most intrepid politician. The architect of a torturous course between federalism and separatism resigned.

These reconciliations, these passings of torches to younger generations and wider bodies of people symbolize the realization of visions. From our leaders we demand revolutionary ideas and innovative means, all to achieve time-tested ideals. We demand great leadership, and with great leaders we expect greater visions. Yet we are not placing ourselves within the very revolutions we demand.

Already the in-fighting has started. Groups within Israel and Palestine claim betrayal, and vow their unremitted opposition to the accord. Hopefuls jockey for position in the race for Quebec; yet another cartographer to plot the course. The plans for reconciliation and cooperation are being negated in the name of "higher" sectarian goals. The visions of communality are already being negated.

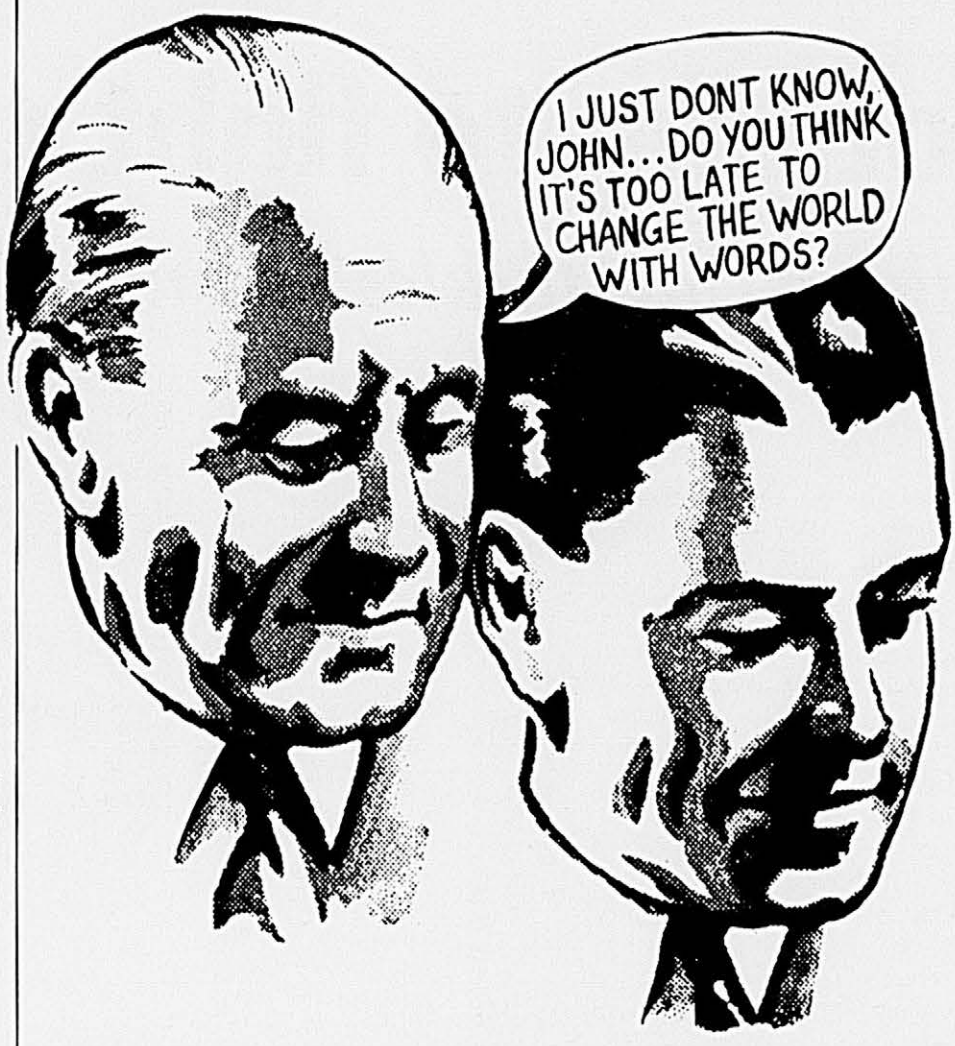
Were the leaders' visions strong enough? These politicians spoke of association and mutuality. They saw themselves as representatives of distinctive communities, but they ceased to be representatives because their electorate, their communities, could not find a place within those plans. Lost in illusory grandeur and historical legacy, the sub-groups are losing sight of the bigger issues.

Leaders should be judged and evaluated, but we are abandoning this right to critical dialogue because we increasingly see our interests within the white walls of safe homes.

The people are not participating in constructive change, because they have lost their own greater vision.

Were the dreams great enough? Or are we too unthinkingly obstinate.

Kristen Boon



Daily Days are here again!

September 24th and 25th

THE MCGILL DAILY IS SPONSORING A DAY OF TRAINING SEMINARS FOR NEW RECRUITS AND OLD HACKS TO LEARN ABOUT NEWS WRITING, BASIC INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES, INVESTIGATIVE RESEARCH, LAYOUT SKILLS AND A HOST OF OTHER USEFUL SKILLS.

HYDE PARK

Women of colour and health

An opinion by Rima Banerji

"We want to live well. You cannot understand me or offer me humane and sensitive health care without understanding how my race, my class, my gender have shaped the contours of my life, my view of the world and my personal and political identity as a lesbian."

- Carmen Vazquez, co-ordinator of Lesbian and Gay Health Services of the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

Women of colour living in a racist, (hetero)sexist, and classist North American society are especially prone to ailments affecting both physical and mental health. Whether we talk about eating disorders, cancer, depression, addictions, AIDS, or sexually transmitted diseases, illness has a strong impact on many of our lives.

It is assumed that anyone affected by these health risks can be taken care of by medical establishments, and that the Canadian socialized health care system provides adequate services to all. Unfortunately, we still need to find a cure for the racism, homo/lesbo/bi-phobia, and sexism that ail health care institutions themselves.

The medical field needs to be sensitized to the specific needs of women of colour. People of colour need to be targeted for an aggressive outreach program to educate them about the danger of the ailments they are affected by. AIDS is still thought of as a primarily white, gay, male disease. However, in the United States at least forty per cent of new AIDS cases are in the African-American communities, although they only make up twenty per cent of the population.

Seventy per cent of those affected in these groups are heterosexual women. These alarming numbers confirm that the lack of preventative education about safe sex, lack of services such as condom distribution, the high cost of doctors and treatment, make it difficult for women of colour to avoid HIV infection.

When receiving treatment, patients encounter problems such as discrimination on the basis of gender, sexuality, and race. Sensitizing health care personnel to the needs of people of colour, gays and lesbians, and women is an essential part of creating a safe enviroment for patients.

Having the choice of seeing doctors who are of the same sex or from a similar cultural background or sexuality ensures the comfort of the patient and gives her a choice. And if the health care staff reflects the diversity of society, it can be helpful in making the process of treatment less intimidating and alienating.

As well, a Western male concept of curing disease is not always the proper avenue for healing. The Canadian health system does not regard herbal remedies or naturopathy as "medicine", and many women end up not even visiting doctors in the first place. Alternative therapies for body and mind are not legitimized, devaluing the healing practices of cultures of colour.

These problems must be addressed by health care providers if the system is to be made truly accessible to all people. As women of colour, we need to lobby for fundamental changes in the attitudes of health care professionals towards us. We must demand that they diversify their approaches to truly include us.

Daily Days Schedule...

Friday

11:00 am—Seminar on the dangers of libel, by David Bergman, lawyer for the McGill Daily

12:30 pm—An introduction to basic newswriting, by Daily staff

1:30 pm—Culture Vultures! How to write for the funkiest arts/political rag on campus.

3:00 pm—Interview techniques and finding resources for writing good news stories. A talk with Denise Babin, a former president of la Presse Étudiante du Québec and former Québec bureau chief for Canadian University Press, who now works at Le Devoir.

4:00pm—Break for beer and pizza!

5:00pm—Muckraking, Dirtdigging and going through the trash. The ins and outs of investigative research, with Canadian University Press National Bureau Chief and former Excalibur (York University) features editor, Doug Saunders.

Saturday

2:00pm—Layout Seminar by Zack Taylor

9:00pm—Party at Dave Ley's house

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THE McGILL DAILY

Garvey Junior Visits Montreal

BY DAVE AUSTIN

Marcus Garvey is certainly one of the least recognised and least understood of the many figures who have who played a major role in shaping the minds and destinies of Black people this century, as well as shaping America's policy towards "subversive" organisations in the United States.

The Jamaican—born Garvey was the founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1914. The UNIA boasts one of the largest mass movements the world has witnessed this century, with millions of followers worldwide.

The UNIA had a large following in many African countries, namely South Africa where the founding fathers of the A.N.C. would gather in secluded places to read government-banned copies of the *Negro World*, the voice of the UNIA. The *Negro World* kept them in touch with political events around the world, particularly pertaining to the world's scattered Black population.

Several heads of states of (then) newly independent African countries, such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Patrice Lumumba of the former Belgian Congo (present-day Zaire), stated that the philosophy of Marcus Garvey and the UNIA played a prominent role in shaping them ideologically.

The UNIA had numerous chapters in the US (Malcolm X's mother and father played a strong role in the Nebraska chapter), in Central and South America and in Asia. A Montréal chapter has existed since 1921 and still flourishes today.

In addition to being a national hero of Jamaica (this having an ironic twist as the colonial government made life for Garvey all but impossible upon his return and subsequent sojourn in his native country), Garvey was also one of the dominant figures in the Rastafarian religion.

The UNIA stood for the economic and political development of people of African descent around the world, and advocated racial pride and respect among Black people. This at a time when Black people were consistently lynched and exposed to various forms of physical and psychological oppression.

In 1925, Marcus Garvey was imprisoned on trumped-up charges of mail fraud, after a long and rigorous campaign to destroy both him and the UNIA by J. Edgar Hoover. This is the same Hoover who played a major role in the destruction of several Black organisations in the 60's and 70's and who was almost certainly involved in the assasinations of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 1932, after a long and tiresome campaign by his followers, Garvey was released and deported to his native Jamaica. Although the UNIA continued to play an important role in the lives of people of African descent, it began to decline in numbers and in strength after Garvey's deportation

Garvey's death in 1940 signalled the end of an era and the spiritual demise of the UNIA.

On September 11 1993, Marcus Garvey Jr., son of the late Marcus Garvey and present head of the UNIA, visited Montréal as a guest of the Montréal chapter.

The following is the first part of an interview in which Garvey Jr. discussed his father, the history of the UNIA, and the role he sees it playing in the future.

Daily: I would like to start off by asking you a few questions about yourself. Could you tell me exactly where you were born, the things you remember about your father and a little about your own personal background.

Garvey: Well, I was born in St. Andrews, Jamaica in 1930. I grew up in Jamaica, went to school there, and in 1953 I went to study in England, originally intending to do law, but while over there I switched into engineering.

So my training and background have come in three areas; in England at the University of London, in Jamaica at the University of the West Indies where I did mathematics and graduate work in physics, and in the United States, at the City University of New York where did my physics and electrical engineering.

How much time did you spend in Jamaica as a child?

When I went to study in England I was just 23. Then I came back after five years.

Did you spend any time in the United States?

I came to the United States in the 70's and I've been living here ever since, but of course I go to Jamaica at least twice a year.

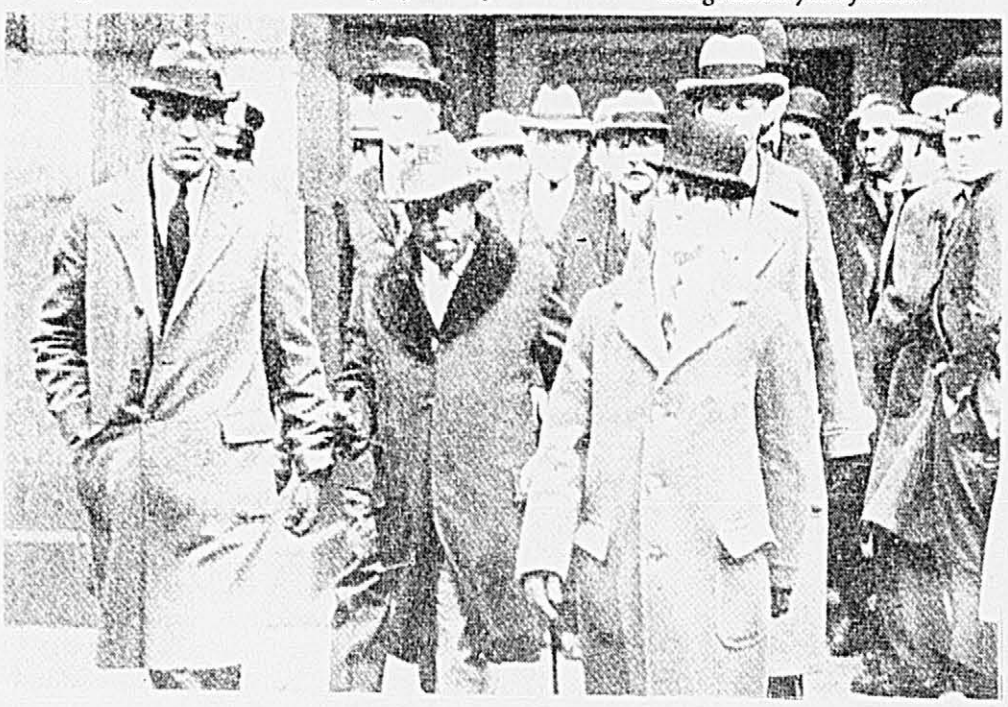
So you did not live in the United States when your father was living in the United States?

Oh no. I wasn't born yet. I wasn't born until after my father was deported from the United States. That's why when some people meet me they figure I would be walking around with a cane because they don't get the chronology right. Marcus Garvey had his children when he was over forty years old. So that's why there appears to be this time difference. We [me and my brother] were born in Jamaica.

So you were exactly how old when your father died?

In 1940 I was nine years old.

So I guess you would be old enough to remember some things about your father.



Well, I was nine years old but, for two years before that, we had not seen our father because I got sick in England with Rheumathoid Arthritis and my mother was advised to take me back to Jamaica otherwise I would become permanently crippled. So we left England early in 1938 and we did not see our father after that. So that my recollections of my father are that of a seven year old.

What do you remember about your father and the movement surrounding him?

Well what I remember is that we lived in England in South Kensington and there was an office [at] number two Boman Crescent. So you see, you do have memories as a child.

Marcus Garvey Jr. at Montreal Chapter of UNIA

The thing that I remember about my father is his massive dignity. Marcus Garvey was a very dignified and very powerful man. And as a child this came over very strongly. He was also always well dressed. I never saw my father any time around the house looking sloppy or casual...He got up in the morning, he was dressed.

In the house of Marcus Garvey we were always surrounded by books, so my brother and I took to reading books at a very early stage and this set us on our path. We just couldn't help reading because by father had this massive library and [if] you went over to the office there were always books and magazines being shipped all over the world and everything was so busy.

It was a very busy place...I don't remember going to meetings where he spoke. I may have been but I don't remember. But its the powerful presence [that stays in my mind].

But, although you know the presence is powerful, at home he did not impart that booming voice that I understand from all the people that heard him. He spoke quietly. But everything was, you know, a command; forceful and strong.

At the period of time in England just prior to your going to Jamaica, at what stage was the UNIA? I know that's long after Marcus Garvey had been deported from the United States.

This was the time after the big break of the 1929 convention. The 1929 convention occured just before I was born. In that convention there was a breakaway group that was formed, an American group which broke away from the UNIA and the leadership of Marcus Garvey.

Notice that the association is called today the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League 1929 of the World. This means that we are in the direct line of succession of Marcus Garvey.

It is pretty clear that their actions were encouraged by the United States government and by the other governments of the time. They were busy robbing the assets of the real UNIA

As to what has happened since, we are in existence today in the direct line of succession from Marcus Garvey and we are doing the work. The people who broke off do not exist and they did not exist very long after that.

Now at the time in the 1930's when the UNIA was much reduced, it was still a massive organisation (and I am now talking about the ligitimate UNIA). I have had access to documentation on conventions held right here in Canada in 1937 and — here is the amazing thing—there were six divisions here in Canada representing Costa Rica, one country in Central America. So you must realize that at that time the UNIA was much weakened but it was still a massive organisation and still the largest organistation of African peoples in the world.

Other organisations are attributed with taking over the followers of the UNIA. That was not true at the time. The UNIA still continued as a viable and powerful organisation up until the time of the death of Marcus Garvey.

Al Jaber Speaks on The Peace Treaty

BY AFRA JALABI

Abdul-Malik Al Jaber talked to a small audience on Thursday, September 16.

Al Jaber, a Palestinian, has been involved in the Peace Process for the last year and a half, and he was a delegate in the Multi-Lateral talks on the environment and water resouces. He lives in the West Bank and is the director of the Centre for Renewable Resources.

Here are some of his insights concerning the Peace Treaty signed in Washington between the PLO and the Israeli government.

Al Jaber explained some of the implications of the Peace Process, especially for the Palestinians living in Israel and the West Bank.

"As one of those who are participating in the peace process, I think there is a need to mention some important facts. The huge compromises that we made as Palestinians: No Jerusalem, no representation from Jerusalem, no participation of the PLO."

Other setbacks in the negotiations, explained Al Jaber, are the unfair conditions the Palestinians started with two years ago.

"The Israeli team started the negotiations very relaxed. We were negotiating with the minimum acceptable conditions to the Palestinians and we were asked to improve these conditons which was a very difficult task to do."

During the Peace Process, the Palestinians supported the process. Yet that support started declining drastically and the opposition became more apparent.

"This has to do with many reasons. The negotiations changed nothing in the Occupied Territories. On the contrary the conditons deteriorated, violence increased. Palestinians started witnessing things they never saw under the Israeli occupation. And I refer here to recent actions in Gaza where the Israeli army used helicopters with anti-tank missiles to destroy houses, and this hadn't been used before in the Gaza strip," said Al Jaber. He added:

"At the same time economic aid is not coming from the PLO to the institutions. I'm talking about universities that haven't been paid for the last 7 months. Professors haven't been paid their salaries. So you can imagine what an ordinary person is doing."

For Al Jaber, the conditions of the Peace Treaty were unfair. He expressed how the Palestinians couldn't change anything. "It is the Americans and the Israelies who dictate. So, we basically didn't feel there is much change in the negotiations," he said.

As an insider participant, Al Jaber provided the audience with some insights concerning certain parts of the Treaty itself. He went through some entries that have not been published for the public yet, such as issues relating to power divisions and potential developments.

"There are many bad aspects in this Treaty and some others are scary, because the Treaty doesn't refer to crucial issues, like Jerusalem, like the settlements, like stateland, borders, security. It says we will talk about this and that. And that's not enough," Al Jaber said.

The Treaty, explained Al Jaber, includes articles that deal with joint committees between Israel and and the Palestinians. There will be different joint economical committees, a committee for security, and one for regional cooperation.

Al Jaber expressed his fears about economical joint committees. "Our economy can not be compared to the Israeli economy. Actually, the Israelis tried systematically, during the last 50 years, to link our economy to their economy. We were not allowed to have our own economy. They didn't give us the space.

Even the industries that were initiated in the Occupied Territories were linked to the Israeli economy. We are talking about factories where we had to bring all the raw material from Israel without any exception. When we had attempts to start exporting our products, there were completely restricted." said Al Jaber.

According to the Treaty, Palestinian authorities will be appointed to supervise issues such as health, education, taxation, police, environment and water.

"When considering education, the Israelis basically were not funding the education (in the West Bank) for a long time. On the contrary, the education system run by the Israeli government is not liked by anybody and they (the Palestinians) don't want it there."

Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank ran their own universities, where education and control over information were always at stake. Some of the universities were closed for long periods of time.

"We were running an important altarnative education system through our grass root groups. We actually started working on progressive educational materials," said Al Jaber.

"When it comes to agriculture and employment, they [the Israeli government] don't want to be stuck with these masses of Palestinians, because according to the International Law, they are responsible for the people they occupy. They are responsible for finding them jobs. We have seen the high rates of unemployment in Gaza and the Occupied Territories," said Al Jaber.

DAILY PHOTO BY DAVID KENNEDY

Some people in the audience had questions concerning the political and military implications of the Treaty. Al Jaber talked about the fears of the Palestinians concerning the upcoming elections and other issues such as the police force.

"The Police force is a very shaky and crucial issue, because it's very dangrous and serious. It has to be defined in a clear way. Are we talking about a police force that will repress the Palestinians, that will do the job of the Israeli army or are we talking about a police force that will protect the Palestinians." asked Al Jaber.

"It seems from the way I represnted this treaty, we should refuse it. Why do Palestinians support the treaty? If you ask me, I'll tell you we have to support it." In fact many people in the audience wanted to know why, given all these setbacks, many Palestinians supported the Treaty.

"There are actually several reasons for that suppot." said Al Jaber. "The major important reason is that during the last 5 years, the Palestinians in the Occupied Terrietories were living a systematic deteriorating conditions. It was a joint interest. They wanted the Palestinians in the Occupied Terretories to reach a stage where they are inscure in everything, economically, in their values, in their social life. The hands of the Israelies weren't away from that." said Al Jaber.

The economic conditons became bad. The PLO had no money to fund institutions such as universities and the health sector. The Grass root groups were providing services to Palestinians, "services that the Israelies are supposed to provide. Who was going to pay for all that? There were no money." said Al Jaber. "So, for the Palestinians, after the Gulf War and after the closure of the West Bank, that was the peak. They felt that they have reached the stage where they can not take it any more." Said Al Jaber.

"Enough is enough. We had it. When you reach that stage, that's it, you cannot take it anymore. Anything will be acceptable. Anything will be a way out of this mess." Al Jaber told the audience.

"A second reason is that the Gulf countries stopped giving aid to the PLO. On the contrary, they started linking this aid to signing a treaty with Israel. We recieved clear messages from Saudi Arabia and from the rest of the Gulf states. The same thing with Western countries. They were promising the PLO huge packages of aid after they sign the treaty with Israel.

"So, the PLO looked at the situation and said fine, we are stuck now, we don't have money, and the situation in the West Bank is so bad. And there is the promise of aid if we sign the treaty," Al Jaber said.

"Just few months ago Mr. Rabin was saying that he cannot imagine himself sitting with Yasser Arafat. Now we have Mr. Rabin shaking the hands of Arafat. So, in 6 months from now, in a year from now, things will change. The same way things changed in this treaty, other things will change too." Said Al Jaber.

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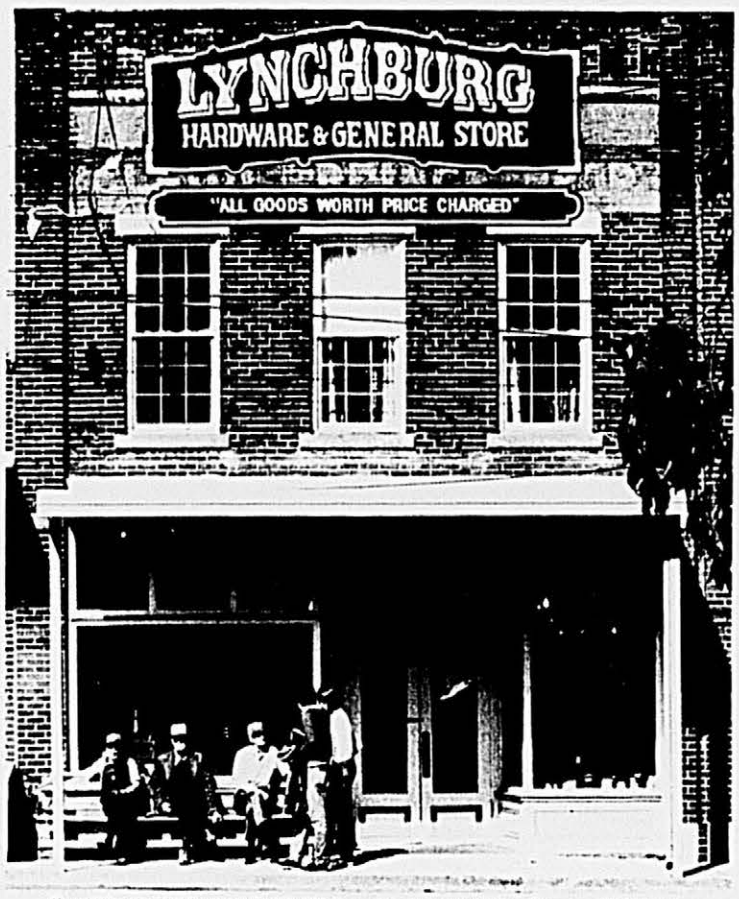

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